

MDWFP MARKETING PLAN

2013-2017

OVERVIEW

The MDWFP has developed a strategic framework to direct its efforts in carrying out its mission. However, many conservation challenges stand between the MDWFP and its goals and objectives.

To address our conservation challenges and meet our conservation goals we must inform our publics, re-shape the attitudes/perceptions of our publics, and commit our publics to act. This will require a comprehensive marketing plan including communications and public relations.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Challenges outlined in the MDWFP Strategic Plan that will require effective marketing, communications, and public relations plans include:

- A. Overcoming public apathy towards conservation issues
- B. Addressing the general public's lack of awareness of the Agency's mission and responsibilities
- C. Effective marketing campaigns to promote agency goals and increase public support
- D. Identifying a long-term, dedicated funding source to ensure conservation delivery through research, fish and wildlife management, monitoring, and facility maintenance and improvements

Goals outlined in the MDWFP Strategic Plan that will require effective marketing, communications, and public relations plans include:

- A. Information and Education—we will improve public understanding of and involvement in conservation and management of fish and wildlife.
"Information and education goals will be achieved when established benchmarks are reached regarding public awareness, understanding, and participation of conservation efforts."
- B. Management and Administration—we will enhance the MDWFP's capability to manage its resources and to operate effectively and efficiently, with accountability at all levels.
"We will achieve our goals when the agency is recognized, respected, and emulated by the conservation and recreation community and the public."

MARKETING PLAN TIMELINE

Phase I—Rally the Troops ("Thank you, Sportsmen"/ Sportsmen=Conservation), 2013-2014

Phase II—Recruit Conservation Allies (Broaden our Constituency) 2015-2016

Phase III—Call to Action (Support for conservation Funding) 2016-2017

PHASE I—RALLY THE TROOPS

"The conservation of the nation's natural resources and enhancement of outdoor recreation opportunities ultimately depend upon the positive opinions and attitudes of Americans toward these issues, as well as their commitment to act on their behalf. The key to instilling this commitment is through effectively designed communications plans and programs."—Responsive Management

COMMUNICATIONS & ADVERTISING PLAN

GOAL: to secure the support necessary for conservation

OBJECTIVE: to communicate to hunters and anglers the importance of conservation, our shared role in conservation (including funding), and the benefits of hunting and fishing to one's quality of life and Mississippi's economy.

STRATEGY: to communicate to hunters and anglers from the point of view of a sportsman (when applicable).

WHY?

- It adds credibility when coming from a third-party (it's one thing to toot your own horn, it's another thing when someone else does it for you).
- It's more relatable. Our target audience will identify themselves with a sportsman *not* a MDWFP employee.
- It will visually connect the role of sportsman with the work we do; therefore it will equate sportsman and conservation. Outcome 1. As sportsmen begin to identify themselves as more than hunters/anglers but as conservationists, their level of responsibility-ethically, socially, and financially-should increase. Outcome 2. The non-hunter/angler's perception of/attitude toward sportsmen should improve as they also begin to view sportsmen as more than hunters/anglers but as conservationists.

HOW?

- A. RADIO -- 4 (:15) ads were produced and broadcast in statewide markets from Nov 2013- Jan 2014. These ads communicated the role of hunters in conservation. A (:30) ad (and live mention) ran during the 2013 MS State football season thanking hunters and anglers for their role in conservation. A similar ad ran during the 2014 MS State and Ole Miss football seasons as well as their 2015 baseball seasons.
- B. TV -- MDWFP produced and broadcast a (:30) ad featuring a Mississippi farmer/cattleman who also manages his property for wildlife and hunting opportunities. This ad ran during college bowl games in 2014 and had a regular flight on evening ESPN programming, a.m./p.m. news programming, MPB programming, and during Mossy Oak programming throughout Jan/Feb 2014. It ran again Nov 2014 - Jan 2015 during select SEC and NFL football games and some news programming. The ad aired in statewide markets during both campaigns. Additional, a longer format of the ad (1:15) video was produced and posted on YouTube and a link pushed out on MDWFP's social media platforms and e-newsletter. At the end of both formats the featured conservationist stated his name and "I am a Conservationist."
- C. PRINT-- MDWFP ran a series of print ads featuring MS conservationist (i.e. Delta farmer who manages his property for waterfowl, a father/son hunting) and featuring MDWFP staff. All ads included the headline "I am a Conservationist." Some included a description of their contribution to conservation in Mississippi while other ads included only headline and branding/url. These ads were featured in MS Sportsman, MS Outdoors, and MS Farm Country magazines throughout 2013-2014.
- D. WEB -- A conservation department was created on MDWFP's website housing information pertaining to the roles MDWFP, hunters, and anglers play in conservation, how conservation in MS is funded, and ways to get involved in conservation. This department went live in December 2013. In addition, web ads have rotated since then on the conservation department's homepage as well as MDWFP.com's homepage featuring conservationists with the headline "I am a Conservationist."

- E. SOCIAL MEDIA -- The banner ad artwork created MDWFP's website has been pushed on MDWFP's social media platforms with links back to relevant pages within MDWFP's web conservation department. We also utilized social media to showcase our conservationist video. Most of these posts were driven during Fall 2013-Spring 2014.

PHASE II—RECRUIT CONSERVATION ALLIES (Broadening our Constituency)

Our messaging will begin to focus on MDWFP's role in connecting all Mississippians to nature, the environment, broad recreation--all under a label of conservation (i.e. from family reunions at state parks, to Archery in Mississippi Schools, to families enjoying nature based activities like kayaking, hiking, hunting, camping, and fishing, to the MS Museum of Natural Science, to conservation educators in MS schools, to Conservation Officers teaching safety courses, to the wildlife/nature we all view). MDWFP reaches the majority of the public. We are not the same thing to all Mississippians, but we are, in some way, something to all Mississippians. Whether through Mississippi's rich outdoor/natural heritage (i.e. tradition) or to the modern student (i.e. archery, science, education). We will focus our messaging less on our traditional customer base of sportsmen and begin targeting families with children and non-consumptive recreation users (kayakers, hikers, campers, etc.).

PHASE III—CALL TO ACTION

A third-party Funding Coalition will likely be formed among MDWFP and its conservation partners and will begin calling on all user groups to act on behalf of conservation (MDWFP's messaging will support/compliment the Coalition's messaging).